

A BANYAN-LIKE COPPICE OF SOUR GUM
(*Nyssa sylvatica*)

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European botanists have given considerable attention to the growth forms of trees and an abundant literature has been the result of this line of study. American botanists have not treated this field of botanical inquiry with much consideration. The following note is put on record, as a contribution to this subject.

It is well known that the ailanthus (*Ailanthus glandulosus*), white poplar (*Populus alba*) of the introduced foreign trees and sassafras (*Sassafras variifolium*), as a native tree, produce abundant offspring in the form of suckers from the roots until the parent tree is surrounded by a thicket of young trees. Our native sour gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) should be added to the list. On September 18, 1925, the accompanying photographs were taken of a sour gum coppice with the parent tree centrally placed, about which were grouped smaller trees that arose from its roots.* The central and taller tree was 3 feet 9 inches in circumference. There were 187 younger trees about the parent one with diameters ranging from one to three inches and extending in all directions. The coppice measured in a northeastern-southwestern direction 100 feet 6 inches, or 44 feet 8 inches from the parent tree to the northeastern side and 55 feet 10 inches from the central tree to the southwestern side of the coppice. Presumably the extent of the sour gum thicket was determined by the distance to which the roots of the larger tree spread. This interesting banyan-like coppice is found on a farm above Neshaminy Creek near Edison, Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

*A friend insists that these younger trees arose as seedlings from fruit dropped by the larger tree.



COPPICE OF SOUR GUM TREES.



VIEW INSIDE THE COPPICE, PARENT TREE NEAR THE CENTER.